



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration  
Boston Healthcare System

# News Release

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Pause on Inpatient Visitation**

BOSTON – As a safety precaution for Veterans and staff, visiting of inpatients in the VA Boston Healthcare System will be temporarily suspended as of 4:00 p.m. today, Thursday, Dec. 23, 2021, due to increased risk of infection.

“This was a difficult decision, but we are following with concern the rapidly increasing prevalence of COVID-19 in our community, including the Omicron variant, which is driving high rates of transmission and hospitalization at a time when we are near capacity,” said Dr. Michael Charness, chief medical officer for the VA Boston HCS.

The pause on inpatient visitation is designed to help staff focus on ensuring Veterans continue to receive the medical care they need. Exceptions can be made for end-of-life care and other urgent circumstances.

“We appreciate how important visitation is to healing, especially at this time of year, and we will facilitate virtual visitation using iPads and cell phones,” added Charness. “We’re grateful for everyone’s understanding and cooperation with this effort to protect our patients and coworkers.”

The temporary suspension will be lifted as soon as it is safe to do so, in the opinion of VA Boston HCS clinical leadership.